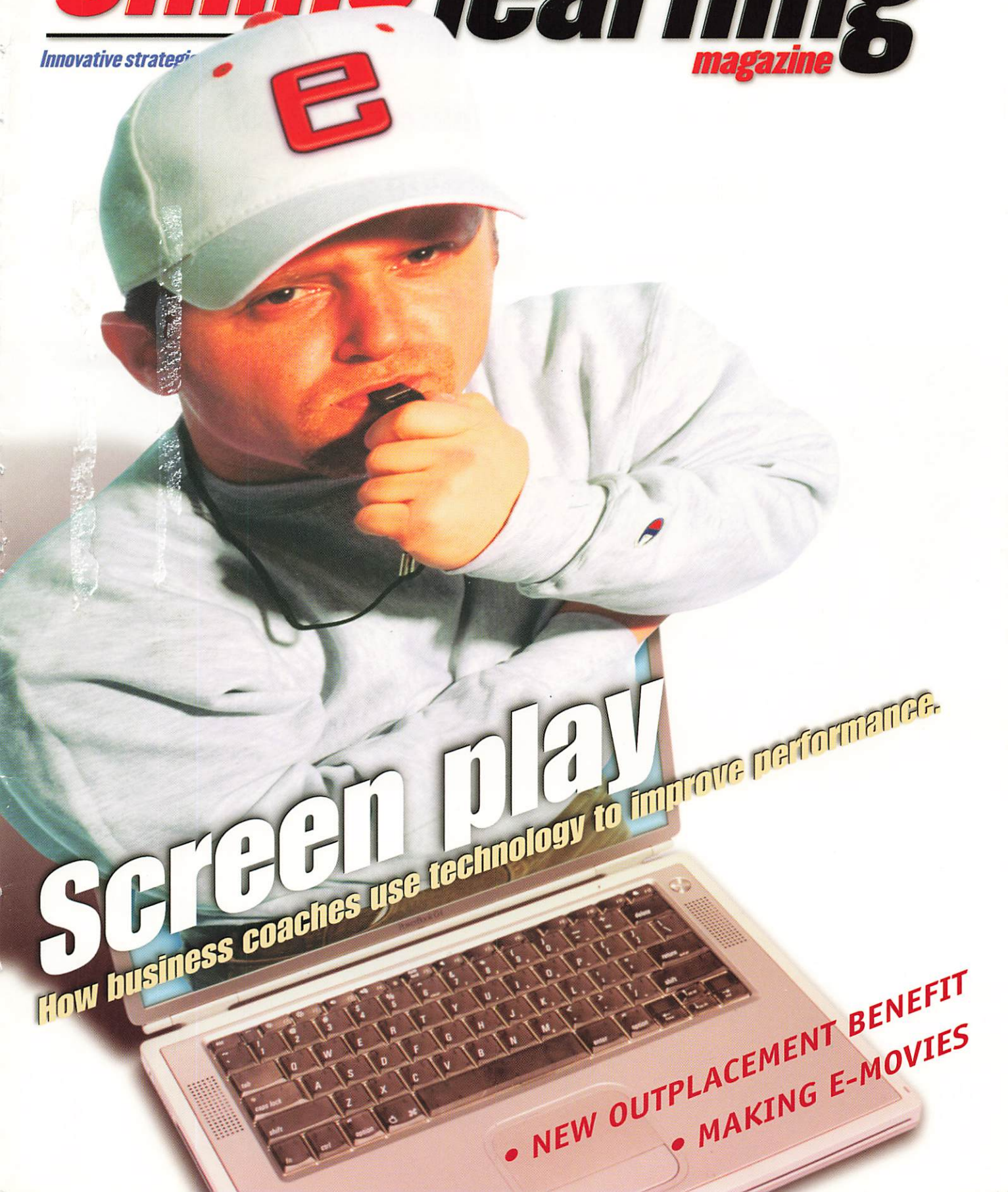
www.onlinelearningmag.com may 2002

online learning™

magazine

Innovative strategi



Screen play

How business coaches use technology to improve performance.

- NEW OUTPLACEMENT BENEFIT
- MAKING E-MOVIES

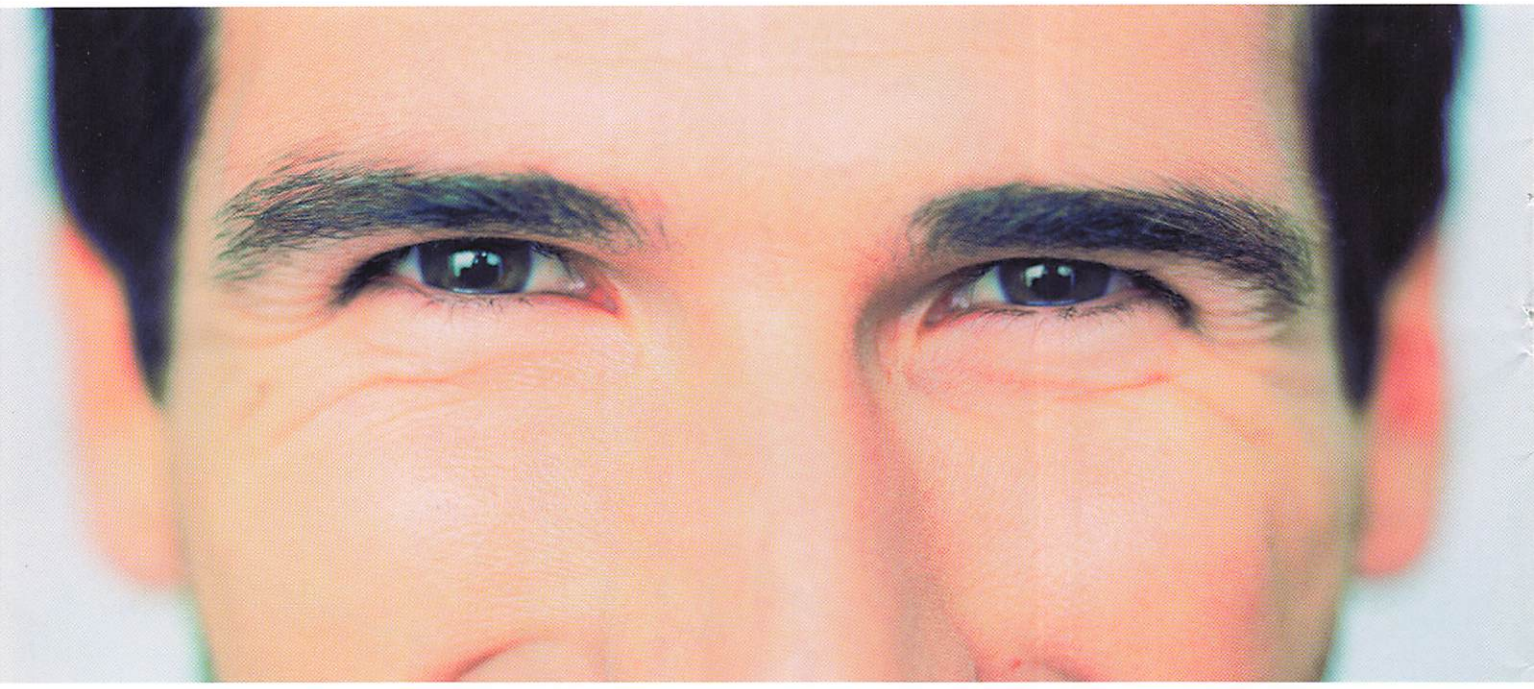
Sales people sell more.

Customers are more loyal.

The workforce is more effective.

Application rollouts are a breeze.

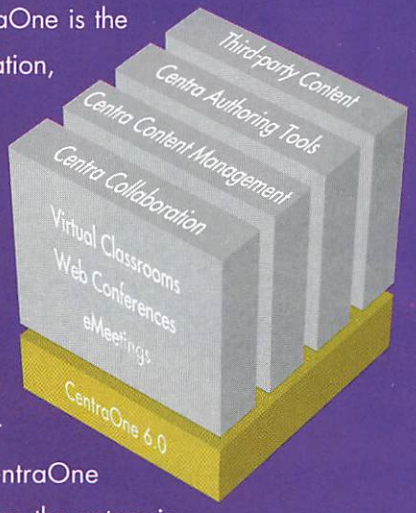
Everyone works well together.



Even the CFO is smiling.

Introducing CentraOne 6.0.
The promise of eLearning and collaboration – fulfilled.

With CentraOne 6.0, you can improve the effectiveness and speed of virtually every business process, while dramatically reducing travel and other expenses. That's because CentraOne is the first complete solution for real-time collaboration, content management and authoring all in one. With CentraOne, you can capture, organize, manage and deliver knowledge, information and skills quickly in a variety of live and self-paced formats. And, by putting everything you need on one open and extensible Web platform, Centra gives you the power to configure the solution that's right for you. Installed on-site or accessed through Centra's secure ASP, CentraOne provides a powerful competitive advantage across the enterprise, and can pay for itself in just months. Now there's a reason to smile.

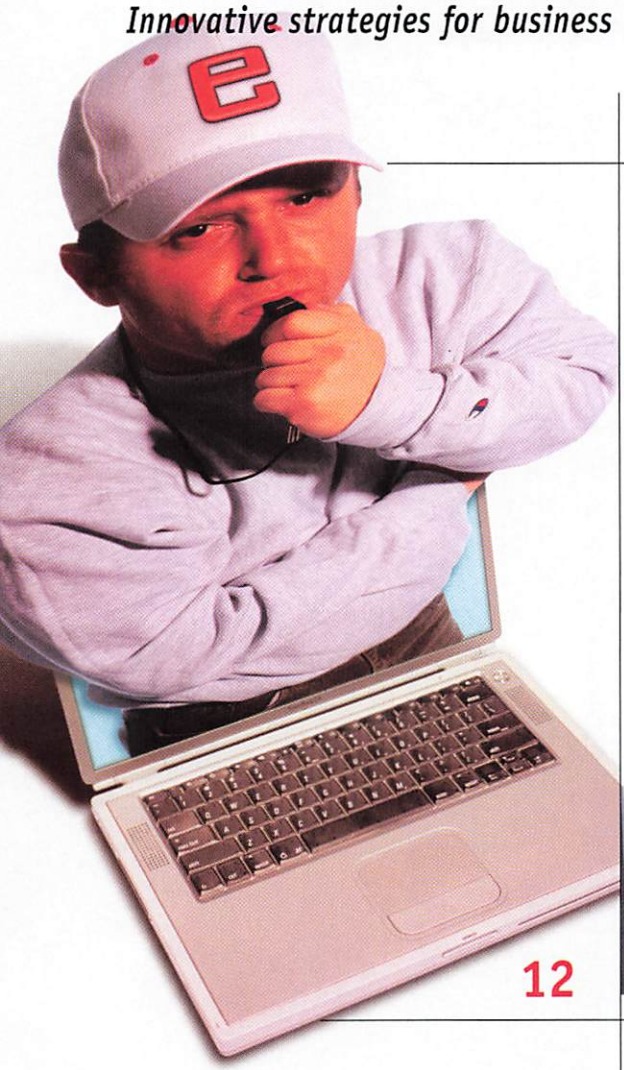


Centra®

VOLUME 6 NO. 5 MAY 2002

online learning magazine™

Innovative strategies for business



CONTENTS

FEATURES

12 Cover Story: Screen play
Five ideas to help business coaches bridge the physical workplace and the online environment.
By Jeff Barbian

18 The newest outplacement benefit
Some employers offer laid-off workers free classes in hope of reaping delayed rewards.
By Kim Kiser

DEPARTMENTS

4 Between the Lines
A word from the editor.

6 Plugged In
Online corporate degrees, free e-learning sites, business gets Googled.

22 Humble Opinion
Self-paced learning need not be boring.

26 Savvy Buyer
Streaming video servers.

31 Ad Index

32 Reality Check
Good science.

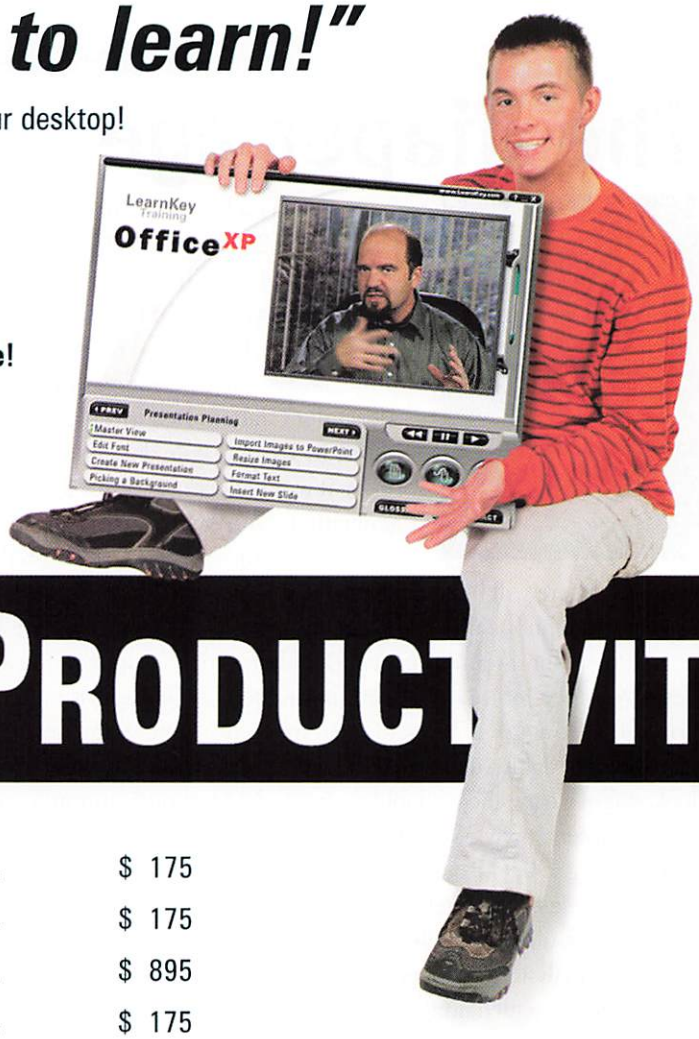
Cover photo by Dan Marshall

OnlineLearning, Vol. 6, No. 5 (ISSN #1532-0022, USPS #015-827) is published 11 times a year on a monthly basis except for August by VNU Business Media, Inc. 50 S. Ninth St., Minneapolis, MN 55402; (612) 333-0471. All rights reserved. Annual subscription rate: 1 yr. U.S., $89; 1 yr. Canada, $107; 1 yr. international (airmail only) $155 (payable in U.S. funds). Periodicals postage paid at Minneapolis, MN, and additional mailing offices. Canadian Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 40031729. Printed in U.S.A. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *OnlineLearning*, 50 S. Ninth St., Minneapolis, MN 55402.

"This is the way to learn!"

Engage with and learn from Experts right at your desktop!

- **Multimedia presentation**
- **Motivating instruction**
- **Accurate information**
- **Practical and proven – a 99% pass rate!**
- **Convenient and affordable**



LearnKey training for

BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY

Learning Windows XP	3 Sess.	$ 175
Learning Windows 2000	3 Sess.	$ 175
Office 2000 Professional Series	18 Sess.	$ 895
Lotus R5 End User	3 Sess.	$ 175
Project 2000	3 Sess.	$ 175

OfficeXP

Professional Series

15 Sessions

$585**

reg. $785

Available ONLY at learnkey.com/training

NETWORK • ONLINE • CD-ROM • VIDEO

Microsoft® • CompTIA® • Novell® • Cisco® • Lotus® • Adobe® • Linux • CIW®

1.800.865.0165 • learnkey.com/training

LearnKey.

Learn From The Experts™

© 2002 LearnKey, Inc. LK021902

**Limited time offer, some restrictions. Prices listed are for Single-Users. Please call for Multi-User pricing and Corporate solutions.

Source Code #4108

The diaper age

Area codes are my nemesis. I live in 952. I work in 612. My cell is 651. My best friend lives in 763. He works in 651. His cell is 612. Thank God neither of us has a pager. And to think that when Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876, people did not foresee how pervasive it would become within the space of a generation. One American mayor was even considered quite daring when he predicted, "One day there will be one telephone in every city." Imagine that. Just one.

The telephone illustrates a common truth: We tend to overestimate technology's short-term impact and underestimate its long-term capabilities. Ever since John Logie Baird transmitted the first television picture, that box in the living room has remained much the same. Sure, designs have changed and cable surfaced in the '50s expanding our viewing options, but look where we are today: dabbling in on-demand programming, satellite options, interactivity, WebTV and the like. It has only taken some 75 years.

How long will it be before e-learning becomes as pervasive in the business world as the telephone, television or computer are in the home? I don't think there's any doubt that it will gain widespread acceptance, but probably not as quickly as analysts, purveyors and self-appointed gurus would have us believe. E-learning has settled quite quickly into a purported electronic performance support role, making information and procedures readily and easily accessible. However, there are definitely some hurdles to overcome before e-learning can help solve many of the performance-based issues that companies struggle with day in and day out.

What are those hurdles? Technological capability for one. Standards and interoperability issues are another. Weak, e-enabled reference material masquerading as "learning" modules yet another. In a relatively short time – in fact, we're seeing progress on all of these fronts already – these obstacles will be cleared. That leaves us with the more challenging issues of changing learner behavior and dealing with the prevailing negative attitude about workplace learning – particularly the type that takes place outside the confines of classroom walls and inside the more personal confines of cubeland – in an already overburdened, under-the-gun environment.

Only when these hurdles have been cleared will e-learning truly come of age. That is, of course, if our nascent industry makes it to adolescence and enters maturity before e-learning is commodotized, reduced to an out-of-the-box app, or worse yet, becomes just another spoke in a prepackaged ERP wheel.

Tammy Galvin

Executive Editor

online learning magazine™

Volume 6, Number 5, May 2002

50 S. Ninth St., Minneapolis, MN 55402
Phone: 612-333-0471
Fax: 612-333-6526
www.onlinelearningmag.com

GROUP PUBLISHER	Stacey Marmolejo
EDITORIAL	612-333-0471
editor@onlinelearningmag.com	
EXECUTIVE EDITOR	Tammy Galvin
MANAGING EDITOR	Kim Kiser
ASSOCIATE EDITOR	Jeff Barbian
ASSISTANT EDITOR	Ed Welsch
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT	Heather Johnson
GROUP ASSISTANT	Amanda Moeller
ART	612-340-4938
ART DIRECTOR	Stephen D. Clement
PRODUCTION	612-340-4859
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Patty Hlava
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT	Nancy Olson
SUBSCRIPTION & ADDRESS CHANGES	847-647-7987; Fax: 847-647-9566
	OL@halldata.com
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR	Vicki Blomquist
CIRCULATION MANAGER	Lori Longnecker
CIRCULATION COORDINATOR	Jenelle Montoya
PERMISSION TO PHOTOCOPY	Copyright Clearance Center 978-750-8400
FOR REPRINTS OF MORE THAN 100 COPIES CONTACT:	Reprint Management Services 717-399-1900, ext. 100
MARKETING	612-333-0471
MEDIA SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR	Mary Hanson
DIRECTORY MANAGER	Tony Kolars
DIRECTORY COORDINATOR	Marti Brandt
CLIENT SERVICES MANAGER	Suzanne Strand
ADVERTISING SALES	800-328-4329
sales@onlinelearningmag.com	
PUBLISHER/NATIONAL ACCOUNT MANAGER	Bill Wilken 612-340-4967
EAST/MIDWEST	Brad Smith 800-707-7745
NEW ENGLAND	Richard Alden 603-899-3010
WEST COAST	Kelly Schulman 800-707-8177

vnu business publications usa

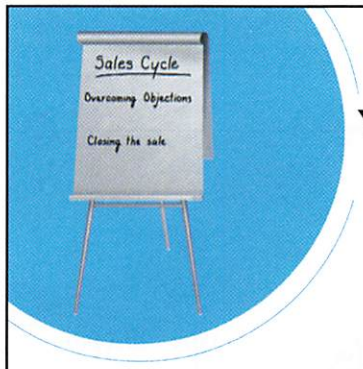
Travel and Performance Group

TRAVEL: BUSINESS TRAVEL NEWS, MEETING NEWS, SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS
PERFORMANCE: INCENTIVE, ONLINE LEARNING, POTENTIALS, PRESENTATIONS, TRAINING
HEALTHCARE: CONTEMPORARY LONG TERM CARE

CORPORATE OFFICERS
President & CEO: **Michael Marchesano**; Chief Operating Officer: **Howard Lander**; Executive Vice Presidents: **Mark Dacey** (Marketing, Media & Retail), **Richard O'Connor** (Travel, Performance, Real Estate/Design and Food Service); Senior Vice President: **Toni Nevitt** (Marketing Information); Vice Presidents: **Joellen Sommer** (Business Management), **Joanne Wheatley** (Circulation)

vnu business media

President & Chief Executive Officer	**Michael Marchesano**
Chief Operating Officer	**Howard Lander**
Vice President/Human Resources	**Sharon Sheer**
Vice President/Business Development	**John Van der Valk**
Chief Financial Officer	**Joe Furey**
President – VNU Expositions	**Greg Farrar**
President – VNU eMedia	**Jeremy Grayzel**



You can
SHOW
them...

or you can
ENGAGE
them

Enhance your training

Delivering media-rich sessions is easier than ever with the touch-sensitive SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard.

Interact with your existing multimedia tools in ways you never imagined!

- Touch the board to access and control any computer application
- Write over applications and save all notes
- Record data and audio as a single file for playback

With the SMART Board interactive whiteboard, participants can concentrate on absorbing, processing, interacting and practicing.

Deliver a SMART learning experience they won't forget!

FREE Guide

To request additional information, pricing or an on-site demonstration, call 1.888.42.SMART or visit www.smarttech.com/onlinelearning3.

Contact SMART before June 30 and receive a free copy of the *Training Room Technology Guide*. Learn about the latest tools and get tips on delivering with and managing your technology.

SMART
Technologies Inc.

© 2002 SMART Technologies Inc. All rights reserved. SMART Board is a trademark of SMART Technologies Inc. Microsoft and PowerPoint are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. QuickTime is a trademark of Apple Computer, Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Plugged In

A master's in Intel?

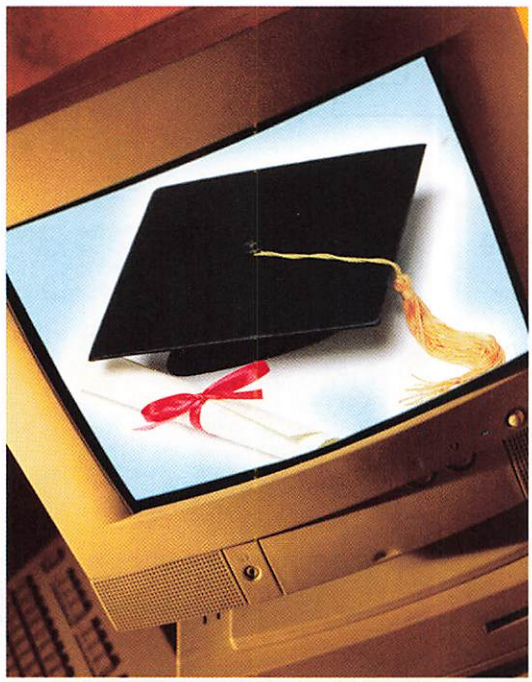
Company-specific online degree programs are gaining more support these days. They're also starting to prove their value to their corporate sponsors.

One of the first companies to create an online MBA for its employees was Honeywell. Staff from the company's Western Region Learning Center in Phoenix worked with Capella University in 1999 to create a 13-course program that integrated subjects of interest to the company into a traditional MBA curriculum.

Since then, several other universities and corporations have built similar programs. Arizona State University launched online MBA programs with an emphasis on supply-chain management for employees of John Deere in 2000 and Lucent Technologies in 2001. Currently, the school is developing curricula specific to Chevron/Texaco and Intel. And last spring, Purdue and Indiana universities began building a technology-delivered double master's degree in engineering and business administration tailored to the needs of General Motors Corp.

One e-learning company has even bet its future on the growth of online corporate-focused degrees. Cenquest has been pairing colleges with businesses that want graduate programs tailored to their needs. The company helped Babson College in Wellesley, Mass., create an MBA program for Intel Corp. It is also working with the University of Texas at Austin on a master's in technology commercialization for IBM.

LaVonne Reimer, president and CEO of Portland, Ore.-based Cenquest, says the reason for the interest



is because corporations are looking to get more out of their tuition-reimbursement dollars. "It used to be if an employee wanted to earn a particular degree, he needed his manager's support. Now companies want proof that there will be a payback to the money they're spending," she says.

Honeywell saw more than a half-million-dollar return on its investment in the MBA program. "That came from directly applying the learning people did in their classes to their work," says Karen Calabrese, marketing manager for the company's training solutions group. Calabrese helped establish the program and was one of its first graduates. "For example, in the operations piece, we all had to find a project internal to the company and work on problem solving and coming up with proposals," she says. "A couple of us came up with suggestions that management thought were good ideas."

Calabrese says MBA enrollment has been on hold since Honeywell merged with Allied Signal and was nearly purchased by General Electric. But that doesn't mean employee interest has waned. "I now have people [who completed the MBA] asking about a Ph.D.," she says.

— Kim Kiser

Panning for broadband gold

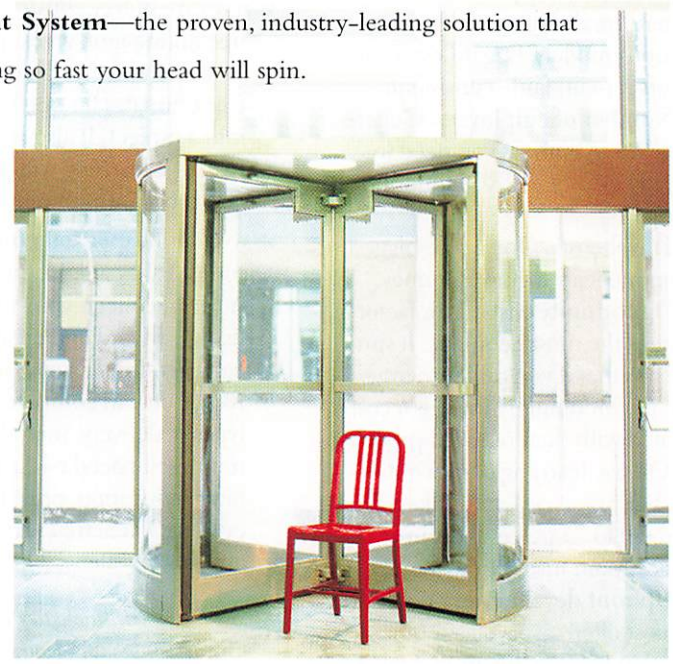
Which Internet-delivered services are consumers most willing to pay for? Sage Research of Natick, Mass., recently asked that question of 600 U.S. households. The top vote-getters were entertainment, including TV shows and movies-on-demand (44 percent); communications such as video conferencing and long-distance telephone service (42 percent); and online education (39 percent).

The report's authors concluded that online education is the biggest potential broadband goldmine. Of all the services they asked about, consumers were willing to pay the most for online education, valuing it at $50 per credit hour or per non-accredited course. The full report is available at *www.sageresearch.com/broadband.pdf.*

— Ed Welsch

Round. And Round. And Round.

A dizzying number of so-called e-Learning experts are trying to catch your attention. No wonder many professionals in your position are confused about where to turn. We suggest you consider Pathlore. Why? Because actions speak louder than words—and we've helped thousands of trainers, learners, Human Resources executives, and CIOs get fast e-Learning results. We can do the same for you with our **Pathlore Learning Management System**—the proven, industry-leading solution that will help you implement e-Learning so fast your head will spin.



Get the Pathlore Learning Management System Fast Path Kit. High-impact case studies, analyst reports, white papers, and product information to get you e-Learning results more quickly than you can imagine.

Request your FREE kit online at **www.pathlore.com/around** or call **888-PATHLORE**

Pathlore

Take a seat. Let's get to work.

Ask Bryan

Dear Bryan,
What are the main factors involved in determining a return on investment (ROI) for online learning vs. classroom instruction? Can you recommend any resources for performing ROI calculations?

—Cost Conscious

Dear Conscious,
There are proven formulas for calculating ROI. The biggest problem is that there are discrepancies among the various models. Regardless, several factors remain fairly consistent:

1. Number of employees. Generally, the more trainees you need to reach, the greater the ROI for online learning.

2. Travel costs. One of the biggest ways online learning saves money.

3. Opportunity costs. This factor is perhaps the most nebulous. It simply means that if you pull someone off the job for training, there is a cost associated with their reduced productivity. Online learning comes out ahead because it generally takes 50 percent to 75 percent less time than classroom instruction.

4. Upfront development costs. This most often favors classroom instruction because the time it takes to develop a traditional course — even with handouts, PowerPoint slides, lesson plans and quizzes — is only 15 percent of what it takes to create an online course.

5. Infrastructure costs. Several of the older ROI calculators completely ignore this factor. That's because the cost of an authoring tool and CD-ROM distribution (the standard at the time) were fairly minor compared with the infrastructure costs associated with a learning management system, external hosting, an enterprise-level content management system, etc. The higher cost of infrastructure could weigh heavily on your final calculation.

I've had the opportunity to evaluate several ROI-calculation tools and found the following to be effective:

- www.mediapro.com/roi. This free spreadsheet from MediaPro does a good job of itemizing costs and showing how calculations were derived.
- www.mentergy.com/roi. With this free online tool, you supply basic variables and the calculator creates cost estimates for one to five years into a project. It also compares the ROI of e-learning with that of classroom instruction.
- www.bnhexpertsoft.com. This robust ROI-calculation program, Advisor, collects your variables using a wizard and creates graphical diagrams showing potential ROI. You can compare several types of delivery, including classroom, self-paced e-learning, distance education, print-based delivery, etc. A free trial version is available on the site.

Send your e-learning tool questions to Bryan Chapman, e-learning analyst for research firm brandon-hall.com, at askbryan@brandon-hall.com.

Free learning

Has your company's training budget been decimated? If so, don't let it stop you from taking learning into your own hands. The following sites offer free online courses for business and pleasure:

www.fathom.com offers asynchronous courses on everything from bioacoustics and classic Hollywood cinema to philosophy and literature. Most of the material is adapted from Fathom's university partners.

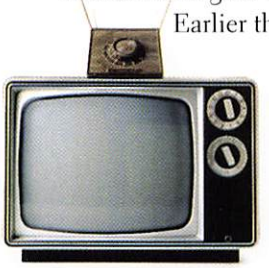
www.barnesandnobleuniversity.com offers more than 50 online courses each month on a variety of subjects. The courses are designed for fun and are led by an instructor with expertise in the subject matter. The bookseller hopes learners will buy the books they need for class at its online store, though they aren't obligated to do so.

www.free-ed.net is a learning portal with no-frills asynchronous courses on the basics of various academic and technical subjects. The free courses are self-directed and text-based, and the abundance of information and links make the site valuable as a reference source.

www.learning-channel.com/showme/ offers one course that belongs at the top of your to-do list: "A Lost Tradition: Haggis-Hurling." It's rumored that the first official Olympic demonstration of this traditional Scottish sport will take place during the 2004 games.

— E. Welsch

Believe it or not



The Home Shopping Network may be the place to buy everything from birthstone rings to hand-hooked rugs, but technology-based training? Earlier this year, Mentor Software, a Norwalk, Conn., e-learning company, began marketing a special "Windows XP and the Internet" CD-ROM course created just for Home Shopping Network customers. According to a company press release, "The occasion marked the first time Home Shopping Network has ever offered e-learning software as a stand-alone product." The price? $39.75.

Keeping Training "On Track" at J.D. Edwards

WHERE DOES A global leader in collaborative enterprise software turn for its training software needs? Building a knowledgeable, committed workforce is one of four key organizational strategies for Denver-based J.D. Edwards, a worldwide provider of software and consulting services that help companies collaborate electronically to manage their business processes, supply chains and customer relationships. To deploy and track the training integral to that effort, J.D. Edwards uses the OnTrack for Training learning management system (LMS) from DKSystems.

"Our business is selling software," says Carolyn Koehnen, process analyst, Education Services Operations for J.D. Edwards. "Providing up-to-date knowledge about our solutions is critical to ensuring that our customers gain maximum value from our products. It's our job in Education Services to see that the right knowledge is transferred to the right people in a timely and cost-effective manner."

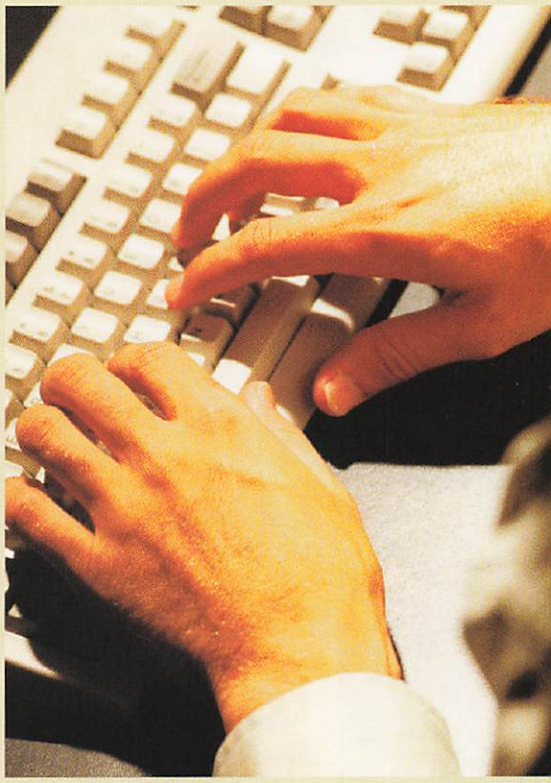
Recently ranked No. 32 in *Training* magazine's compilation of the Top 100 training organizations, J.D. Edwards maintains a network of 64 training centers that provide detailed product knowledge to its employees, customers and channel partners worldwide. The need to accurately account for what's being done where, at what cost, and with what results, is a critical priority.

"A constant focus for us is to improve the professional development of our employees," notes Koehnen. "When our employees are empowered with the knowledge they need, the productivity return to the organization is immense. The OnTrack solution is the central hub that allows us to satisfy the strategic learning objectives and metrics that have been identified by upper management."

As J.D. Edwards implements the product suite throughout its operations, Koehnen is finding that not only has efficiency increased, but there have been real-world time and cost savings as well. "We recently expanded OnTrack to five sites in Australia and New Zealand in just four-and-a-half days," says Koehnen. "They transitioned from using a non-automated tracking system to using OnTrack, which provides a single database for training centers across the globe."

That flexibility and speedy time-to-productivity translates into the prospect of even greater savings as J.D. Edwards' LMS implementation continues to evolve and grow. J.D. Edwards also is leveraging the advanced capabilities of the OnTrack solution, such as DKWorkflow Assistant and DKWebBuilder, to generate even more productivity from its LMS.

Jackie Jacoby, manager of Education Services Operations for J.D. Edwards, is excited about the growing capability managers will have to monitor the training progress of their teams. "With DKWorkflow Assistant



answering requests, automatically printing confirmation letters and automatically generating responses to questions that come in through OnTrack Online, we anticipate a substantial savings in time currently spent on manual processes," she says. And through OnTrack Online, a supervisor will be able to monitor the status and progress of an employee's training against a training plan tied to the employee's job title.

A further extension of OnTrack's advanced capabilities is J.D. Edwards' use of the new DKWebBuilder component. "With DKWebBuilder," Jacoby explains, "the Web application that we're building for internal use will transfer nicely to our external rollouts, but we'll have the added flexibility to present training options in different ways. The tool allows us to create views that are specific to the needs of the audience, so we have training paths tailored to the individual student's needs."

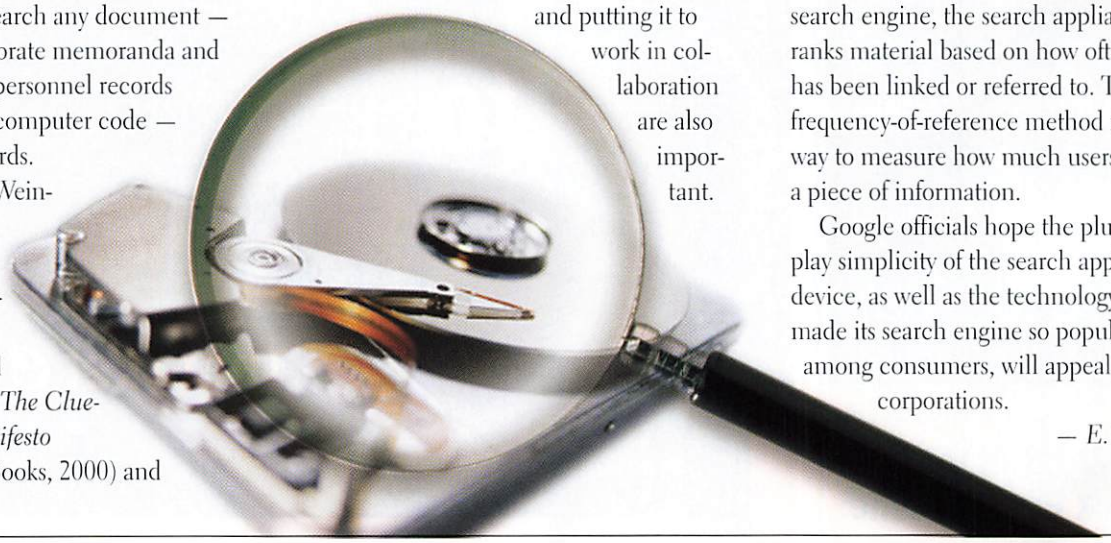
In working together for more than seven years, J.D. Edwards and DKSystems have developed a close business partnership that promises to pay even higher dividends in the years to come.

"Management's aim of creating a knowledgeable, committed workforce has given us compelling reason to manage a world-class learning environment," says Koehnen. "OnTrack assists us in doing that. In registering, delivering, tracking, measuring and reporting on our programs for training employees, customers and partners, OnTrack is really helping us deliver."

Corporate data gets Googled

Internet search company Google is entering the knowledge management market. Recently, the company introduced its Google Search Appliance, a small device that can be installed behind corporate firewalls and can search any document — from corporate memoranda and emails to personnel records and even computer code — for key words.

David Weinberger, a knowledge management expert and author of *The Cluetrain Manifesto* (Perseus Books, 2000) and *Small Pieces Loosely Joined* (Perseus Books, 2002), says a good search engine is only one part of a complete knowledge management solution. He explains that the processes of generating knowledge through conversation and putting it to work in collaboration are also important.



Weinberger says what makes Google's product interesting is that it is based on a search method that "harvests knowledge based on what people from the bottom-up think is worthwhile." Like Google's consumer search engine, the search appliance ranks material based on how often it has been linked or referred to. This frequency-of-reference method is one way to measure how much users value a piece of information.

Google officials hope the plug-and-play simplicity of the search appliance device, as well as the technology that made its search engine so popular among consumers, will appeal to corporations.

— *E. Welsch*

extoll

extoll

x.toll/ v.tr. **1** to praise enthusiastically (f. Latin: *tollere*, to raise), e.g. *"Some of the things we liked about the system include the browser-based approach. (Theorix) has done a great job making very easy-to-use interfaces for choosing templates and populating them with learning content. We also liked the multilingual support available throughout and the fact that instructors have more control over the delivery of instruction."* – **Bryan Chapman**, brandon-hall.com. From LCMS: Comparative Analysis of Systems Used to Construct, Organize and Re-Use "Learning Objects"

Call, click or visit. Toll-free 1 866 231.2449 • info@theorix.com • www.theorix.com

THEORIX™
empowering learning professionals

Learning Management from A to Z (not just *e*)

The *abc's* of the OnTrack Product Suite:

Alerts/Reminders/Notifications
Build your own Learning Portal
Classroom Training Management
Distance Learning Support
E-Learning Delivery & Control
FDA/Regulatory Compliance Support
Gap Analysis and Review
Historical Training Information
Instructor Calendars and Scheduling
Job-Skill Profile Development
Knowledge/Competency Management
Learner-Centric Self-Service
Multiple Sites and Roles
Non-Programmer Configurability
On-the-Job Training Support
Personal Learning Plans
Quick and Easy Deployment
Rapid Return-on-Investment (ROI)
Skills/Competency Management
Tuition Reimbursement Tracking
Unlimited Scalability and Growth
Verification and Approval Processing
Workflow Automation and Routing
Xternal and/or Internal Focus
Your Corporate "Look and Feel"
Zero-in on Learning Opportunities

People learn in so many ways. And e-learning is only one of them. That's why a robust learning management system needs to support so much more.

The OnTrack for Training Product Suite is the only LMS that supports true enterprise-wide learning management with features for all facets of learning, including classroom events, distance learning, on-the-job training and yes, e-learning delivery.

Don't settle for less than *everything* you need in an LMS. **Get OnTrack for Training today.**

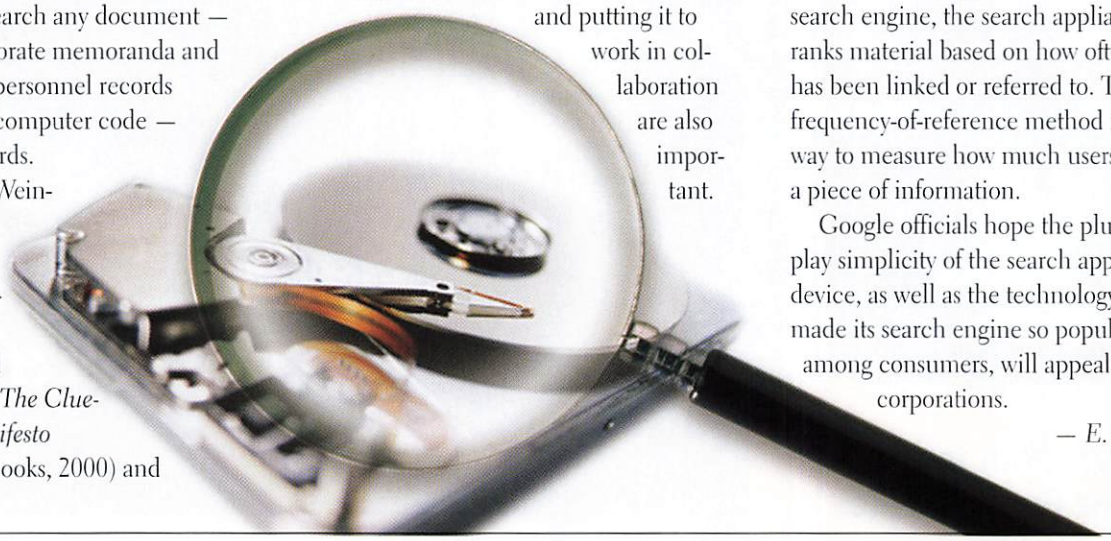
OnTrack FOR Training® PRODUCT SUITE

CHECK IT OUT AT LMS.DKSYSTEMS.COM
OR CALL 800-892-5332

Corporate data gets Googled

Internet search company Google is entering the knowledge management market. Recently, the company introduced its Google Search Appliance, a small device that can be installed behind corporate firewalls and can search any document — from corporate memoranda and emails to personnel records and even computer code — for key words.

David Weinberger, a knowledge management expert and author of *The Cluetrain Manifesto* (Perseus Books, 2000) and *Small Pieces Loosely Joined* (Perseus Books, 2002), says a good search engine is only one part of a complete knowledge management solution. He explains that the processes of generating knowledge through conversation and putting it to work in collaboration are also important.



Weinberger says what makes Google's product interesting is that it is based on a search method that "harvests knowledge based on what people from the bottom-up think is worthwhile." Like Google's consumer search engine, the search appliance ranks material based on how often it has been linked or referred to. This frequency-of-reference method is one way to measure how much users value a piece of information.

Google officials hope the plug-and-play simplicity of the search appliance device, as well as the technology that made its search engine so popular among consumers, will appeal to corporations.

— *E. Welsch*

extoll

extoll

x.toll/ v.tr. **1** to praise enthusiastically (f. Latin: *tollere*, to raise), e.g. *"Some of the things we liked about the system include the browser-based approach. (Theorix) has done a great job making very easy-to-use interfaces for choosing templates and populating them with learning content. We also liked the multilingual support available throughout and the fact that instructors have more control over the delivery of instruction."* – **Bryan Chapman**, brandon-hall.com. From LCMS: Comparative Analysis of Systems Used to Construct, Organize and Re-Use "Learning Objects"

Call, click or visit. Toll-free 1 866 231.2449 • info@theorix.com • www.theorix.com

THEORIX™
empowering learning professionals

THINGS ARE CHANGING. AGAIN.

EVERY SO OFTEN, THE WORLD SPINS A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENTLY. RECORDS ARE BROKEN. LAWS ARE REWRITTEN. INVENTIONS ARE BORN.

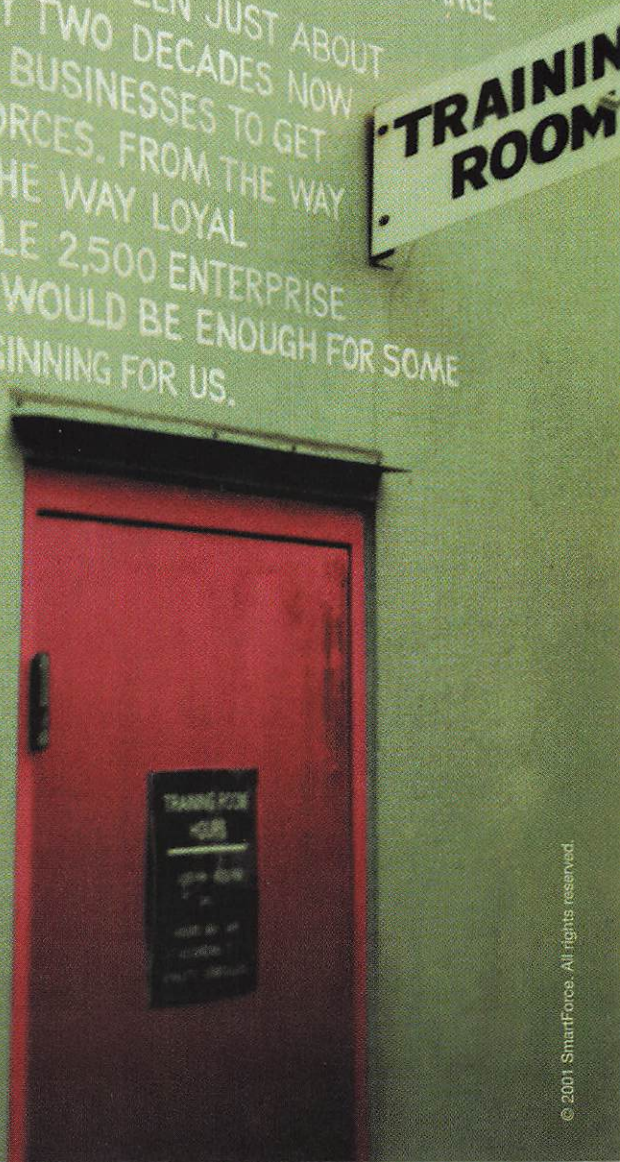
TODAY, ANOTHER KIND OF CHANGE IS UNDERWAY. IT'S A CHANGE IN THE WAY PEOPLE SEE E-LEARNING.

YOU SEE FOR US, IT'S NEVER BEEN JUST ABOUT TRAINING PEOPLE. FOR NEARLY TWO DECADES NOW IT'S BEEN ABOUT EMPOWERING BUSINESSES TO GET RESULTS FROM THEIR WORKFORCES. FROM THE WAY PRODUCTS ARE LAUNCHED TO THE WAY LOYAL CUSTOMERS ARE MADE. AND WHILE 2,500 ENTERPRISE CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES WOULD BE ENOUGH FOR SOME PEOPLE, IT'S STILL JUST THE BEGINNING FOR US.

OF COURSE, WE UNDERSTAND EVERYONE DOESN'T SEE THINGS LIKE WE DO. AFTER ALL, IT TAKES EXPERIENCE TO KNOW WHAT BUSINESSES NEED. AS FOR THE INEXPERIENCED? WELL, THEY CAN EMBRACE THIS VISION OR IGNORE IT.

BUT EITHER WAY, CHANGE IS HERE. FOR GOOD.

WWW.SMARTFORCE.COM



© 2001 SmartForce. All rights reserved.

SCREEN PLAY

COACHES HOPING TO REMAIN RELEVANT IN THE NETWORKED WORLD NEED TO BRIDGE THE PHYSICAL WORKPLACE WITH THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT.

Not many business coaches have a better perspective on the impact the Internet has had on their profession than Madeleine Homan. An original advisory board member at Coach University, a coach-training outfit in Steamboat Springs, Colo., Homan began coaching business professionals when fax machines were a hot commodity. In fact, she claims to be one of the first certified business coaches listed in the Yellow Pages, back when coaching was assuming an official role in the early '80s.

Those were the days when coaching took place in face-to-face sessions, through telephone conferences and in cumbersome fax communiqués. When the Internet Age arrived, coaches began tinkering with Web-based tools like email and instant messaging to deliver their services and make them available to a wider audience.

"The Internet has made the coaching profession extremely visible and navigable to the marketplace," says Homan. "We coaches are a group of rabid learners who love to share and pool our resources. The impact has been amazing."

Coaches who must translate their talents into an online setting may find the process rife with challenges. Those who've successfully supplemented coaching with e-minded instruction offer the following advice.

1. Traditional coaching rules remain relevant.

The benefits of business coaching are many and varied. Coaches can help build teams, develop leaders, align organizations around a vision, resolve workplace conflicts and cultivate a culture of continuous learning. Although coaching traditionally has taken place in person or over the telephone, the Internet adds another set of tools to the arsenal, including email, instant messaging and online chat.

BY JEFF BARBIAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN MARSHALL

> Face to face, we rely on tone and body language. Online, we have to be a bit more careful and develop emotive text-communication skills."
>
> —Nancy White, Full Circle Associates

Coaches need to remember, however, that using a Web-based approach does not mean abandoning traditional coaching techniques. "E-coaching is inherently the same as offline coaching, but it uses a different medium or combinations of media," says Nancy White, a coach and president of Full Circle Associates in Seattle.

Coaching.com, an Escondido, Calif.-based offshoot of the Ken Blanchard Companies, offers a proprietary Web platform that blends traditional and online coaching. "In our case, the 'e' is specifically designed to support scalability," says Homan, who is now chief coaching officer for Coaching.com. "It allows us to tap into a storehouse of coaching resources and convey our instruction to our clients more effectively. We definitely teach clients to use our platform, but it is not essential for them to use our technology. There's a balance that coaches need to find."

KPMG International, a professional services organization based in New York, conducted a pilot project last spring that involved coaching eight managers. The company used Coaching.com's platform, which included a Web interface, access to a resource database for the KPMG managers, and a confidential instant-chat function for online sessions between Coaching.com's coaches and the KPMG managers.

So far, KPMG is pleased with the results and is offering the program on a case-by-case basis to other managers. "The coaching led to worthy outcomes for the participants," says Julian Malnak, manager of learning and development for KPMG. For example, one senior-level manager described a 30 percent to 50 percent increase in his professional productivity, linking the cause directly to coaching, Malnak says.

2. The first session is more important than ever.

Because of the nature of online communication, e-coaches must be more adept at establishing a personal and professional bond up front. They must play to the strengths of the learner and put that person in the driver's seat. "A client can have a kick-butt first session with a coach they've never laid eyes on, but it has to be set up properly," says Homan. "The client must understand what coaching is and what it's not, and the coach has to know how to make an immediate impression."

One key, says Homan, is discerning a client's comfort with technology and the written word. E-coaches need to remember that some people feel less awkward and more engaged talking on the phone than writing email. E-coaches also need to think generationally, as older workers may feel clumsy with online chat or instant messaging.

For example, Homan finds that people age 35 and younger — which she calls the "chatroom generation" — have an easier time online. "I make it clear to my clients that they can use the system, and they can use it as often as they like — I'm on it every day. Some are very into it and some just aren't, and coaches need to feel that out," she says.

Full Circle's White advises coaches not to underestimate the power of emoticons (those text symbols that imply smiles, frowns, grins, etc.) to enrich and personalize those initial communications. "Reciprocity also is important," White says. "Online, it's essential to let the other party know you 'heard' them even if you don't have a comment. Otherwise, your client may feel you don't care or value their last message."

The challenge, says White, is for coaches to "re-tune" their antennae so they can pick up on the subtext of communication. "Face to face, we rely on tone and body language," she says. "Online, we have to be a bit more careful and develop emotive text-communication skills."

3. Be comfortable with the tools.

Anyone with an Internet connection and an email account knows that communicating online is a convenient way to conduct business and share information. Asynchronous tools such as email and discussion boards allow coaches to offer more calculated and reflective exchanges than they could over the phone. The tools are worthless, however, unless coaches learn to use them properly.

Paul Lawrence recently returned to the United States after working in a remote region of Azerbaijan as a volunteer for Project Harmony, a nonprofit outfit that empowers individuals and creates healthier communities through international exchange and training programs.

During his stint in the southwestern Asian country, Lawrence worked off a U.S. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs grant to build online communities. Of course, Azerbaijan is not exactly Silicon Valley. "We held some online events and used an array of tools for helping others understand the concepts of online communication," says Lawrence. His

e-Learning that works.

If you're looking for an e-Learning solution that **works** for you and your students, MindLeaders is your answer. We offer just-in-time availability to hundreds of online courses, reference books, and instant mentors to ll all your training needs.

Find out why MindLeaders was chosen as one of the "Best in e-Learning" by sending an e-mail to sales@mindleaders.com, calling 1-800-833-1505, or by visiting mindleaders.com.

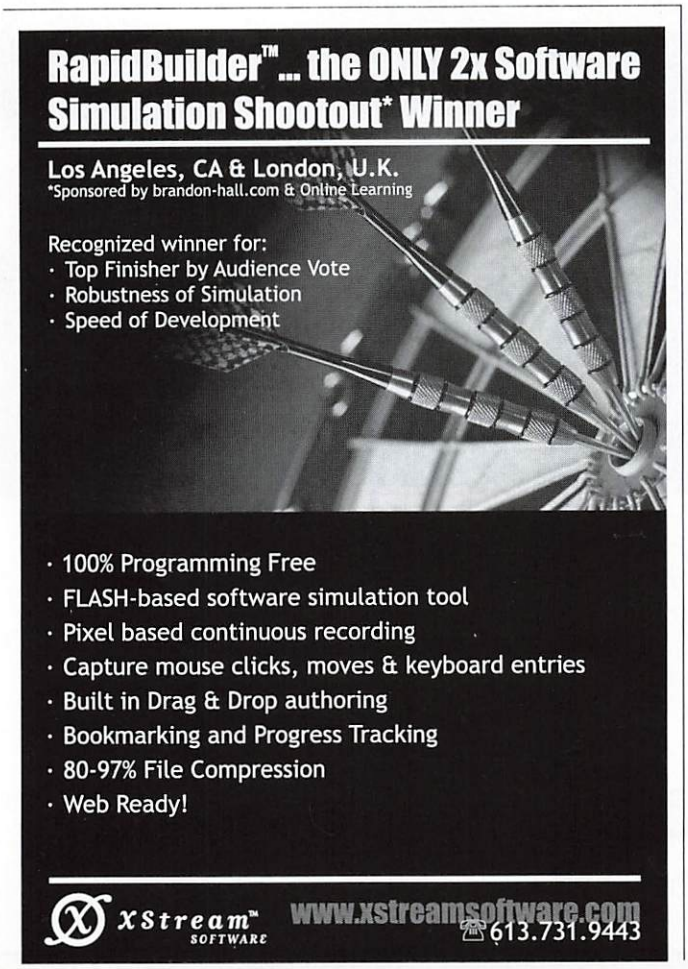
MindLeaders

e-Learning that works.

> "When organizations realize they can get the same or better service for $200 per online session rather than $1,000 per day for in-person sessions, things are going to change."
>
> —Madeleine Homan, Coaching.com

staff members, two of whom were in different countries, started out knowing very little about the range of tools available on the Internet. Lawrence used message boards and instant-messenger tools to coach them, then supported them as they assisted others in the native languages.

One of the biggest challenges for Lawrence was to convince his teams that they were promoting more effective and efficient communication and not just using technology for the sake of trying something new. "Oftentimes we had to repeat what we said online in person," he says. "I had to set specific expectations and ensure that they were providing me with regular feedback on how the online collaboration process was working."


RapidBuilder™... the ONLY 2x Software Simulation Shootout* Winner
Los Angeles, CA & London, U.K.
*Sponsored by brandon-hall.com & Online Learning
Recognized winner for:
· Top Finisher by Audience Vote
· Robustness of Simulation
· Speed of Development
· 100% Programming Free
· FLASH-based software simulation tool
· Pixel based continuous recording
· Capture mouse clicks, moves & keyboard entries
· Built in Drag & Drop authoring
· Bookmarking and Progress Tracking
· 80-97% File Compression
· Web Ready!
XStream™ SOFTWARE
www.xstreamsoftware.com
613.731.9443

4. Make coaching scalable and consistent.

One of the most valuable aspects of an efficient e-coaching platform is its ability to move beyond the individual and become a resource for the entire organization. The Web also offers an invaluable store of networking opportunities for e-coaches looking for advice or direction from other coaches.

When Adobe Systems introduced a coaching program, the e-tools it used to train its coaches helped the company maintain a uniform level of instruction and capture some of those discussions for future use.

"The advantage is the common foundation that we can build on," says Melissa Daimler, senior human resources manager for the San Jose, Calif., software company. "Many of us were being developed by coaches with different styles and from different companies, but we wanted a consistent language of instruction." Daimler says the training delivered by the coaches has been useful in developing an ideology that is consistent with Adobe's values and mission.

Although the initiative still is in the early stages, Daimler has seen the coaches-in-training use the system in different ways. "Some of our coaches are more comfortable on the phone and use the platform just for research, prep-work or follow-up," says Daimler. "We're all in the same building, so much of the coaching we do is in-person, but just having our chats logged for reference and the ability to research have made the tools invaluable."

5. Remember: Reluctance leads to extinction.

Homan claims that coaches who resist offering their services online need to adapt — or else. A good coach is a good coach, she says, and how the service is delivered is irrelevant. "When organizations realize they can get the same or better service for $200 per online session rather than $1,000 per day for in-person sessions, things are going to change," she says.

There still will be executive coaches who charge by the hour and who fly all over the country to work with their high-level clients, but they will be the exception. "Coaches who resist the use of the telephone and Internet technology are going to be out of business," states Homan. "At best, they have three more years."

Jeff Barbian (editor@onlinelearningmag.com) is associate editor of Online Learning Magazine.

online learning 2002

conference & expo

Connecting the World One Learner at a Time

Learn everything you need to create, deliver and manage cost-effective e-learning

Conference and Expo: September 23-25, 2002
Pre- and Post-Conference Workshops: September 21-22 and 26
Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, California

www.vnulearning.com

- 250+ skill-building sessions: keynotes, breakouts, workshops, hands-on labs
- The world's largest e-learning Expo
- Side-by-side product "shootouts"
- The Excellence in E-Learning Awards
- Co-Located Events: E-learning in Higher Ed Conference, E-learning Supplier Summit, Click2learn User Conference
- Special Session Tracks: Simulations, Streaming Media, How to Buy E-learning Products and Services, Case Studies, Performance Support 2002

For information on attending ...
Call: 866.693.1007 or 301.694.5243
E-mail: onlinelearning@vnuexpo.com
Visit: www.vnulearning.com

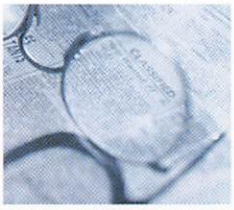
For information on exhibiting ...
Call: 703.488.2700 or 800.765.7615
E-mail: onlinelearning@vnuexpo.com
Visit: www.vnulearning.com

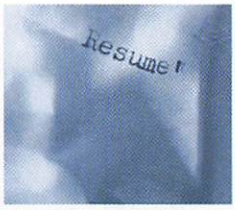
Presented by: vnu business media produced by VNU expositions

online learning magazine | training | online learning e-news | online learning e-reviews | tdi newsletter | chet

Founding Sponsor: click2learn

SOME EMPLOYERS OFFER LAID-OFF WORKERS FREE





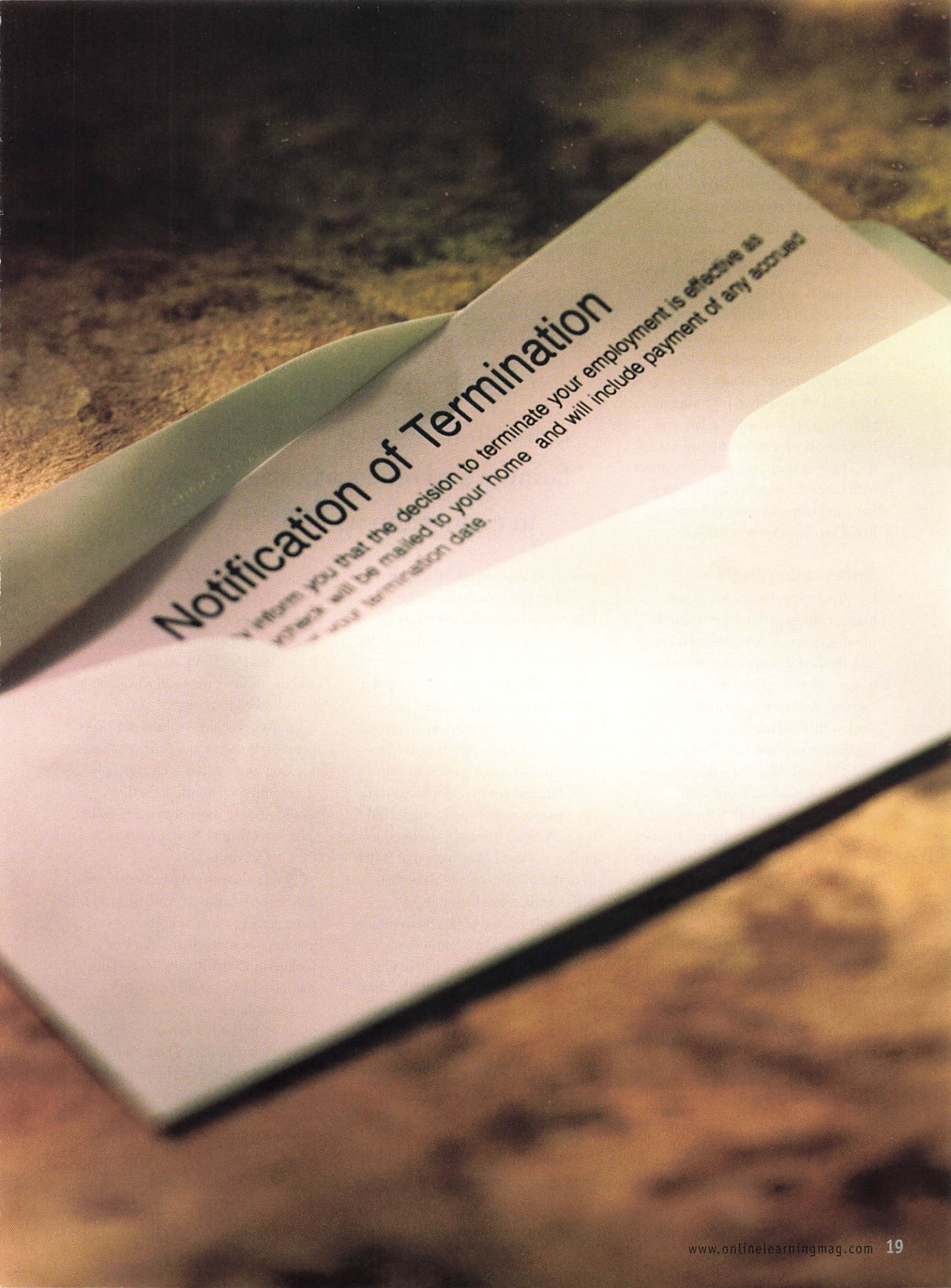
THE NEWEST OUTPLACEMENT BENEFIT

CLASSES IN HOPE OF REAPING DELAYED REWARDS.

When Tong Zhou came to the United States from mainland China in 1997, the tech world held unlimited promise: high-paying jobs, headline-grabbing work and stock options that made millionaires out of office receptionists. Zhou got a taste of that promise. While finishing her master's degree in computer engineering at Santa Clara University, she was hired by Cisco Systems, first as an intern and later as a full-time employee.

Zhou was developing and debugging code for the company's AAA server/software development group when tech stocks started to crumble, and Cisco announced plans to cut 5,500 permanent employees. Last April, just eight months after she started, Zhou's project was canceled, and she found herself amidst the rubble of the New Economy.

By Kim Kiser


Notification of Termination
inform you that the decision to terminate your employment is effective as
efters will be mailed to your home and will include payment of any accrued
your termination date.

In some ways, Zhou characterized the people most affected by this recession. She was a well-paid, highly skilled employee — the kind of worker who has seen some of the biggest employment declines since the second quarter of last year, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But Zhou was more fortunate than many other displaced high-tech employees in the San Francisco Bay area. That's because Cisco, which had never had to shed workers before, became the poster company for how to treat laid-off workers. The company offered up to six months' salary and benefits, set up a career transition center where ex-employees could connect with Cisco customers that had openings, and helped former employees like Zhou train for new careers.

Doing unto others

It's no secret that when times get tough, college and university enrollment goes up, as downsized workers take the first tentative step toward new careers. However, it is unusual for employers — or the companies they work with — to take the lead in helping those workers retrain. In fact, only 7 of 239 respondents whose organizations had laid off staff said their employers offered skills training as a form of assistance, according to a 2001 survey of human resources professionals by the Society for Human Resource Management.

At Cisco, the decision to help former employees reinvent themselves was an easy one. "We wanted to treat people the way we would want to be treated. It's our culture. So when the city of San Jose said they could get some funds for retraining our employees, we said, 'Let's do it,'" says Tim Grace, who managed Cisco's career transition center.

The company was among a group of Bay area employers, educators and e-learning vendors that worked with the city and the San Jose/Silicon Valley Workforce Investment Board to figure out which jobs will be in demand when the economy starts to heat up again. "They asked us things like, 'Where do you see Java in five years?' 'Why is there such a huge need for ASIC engineers?' We gave them our input, and they made final decisions about which courses to offer," says Grace.

By February, Cisco had helped about 265 former employees take advantage of the offer. Already, participants have attained everything from teaching certificates to bartender's licenses and technical certifications.

Cisco isn't the only company helping laid-off workers ease into new careers. About the time the computer networking giant announced its layoffs, Capella University, an accredited online academic institution in Minneapolis, was making plans to help a very different group of displaced workers: taconite miners. In January 2001, the LTV Steel Mining Co. closed its facility in Hoyt Lakes, a town of 2,300 in northern Minnesota. More than 1,400 workers lost their jobs.

Capella offered $500,000 in tuition grants to the displaced employees, their families and others whose jobs were lost in connection with the shutdown. So far, four people have enrolled in Capella's bachelor's or master's degree programs and a handful of others are applying to the school, says Greg Bassett, director of marketing for the university. Their preferred fields of study: technology and business.

E-learning vendors also extended a hand to workers who were affected by the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States. When United Airlines announced plans to place 20,000 pilots, flight attendants, customer service agents, baggage handlers and other employees on furlough, VCampus, an e-learning provider in Reston, Va., volunteered to create an online university for laid-off United workers. Ex-employees could choose from 32 online courses on topics ranging from Web technologies to desktop applications and telecommunications technology. Los Angeles e-learning provider Quisic also donated courses on leadership, business basics and e-business.

Capella offered $500,000 in tuition grants to the displaced employees, their families and others whose jobs were lost in connection with the shutdown.

As of February, former United workers had taken 249 VCampus courses, and the value of the vendor's donation had climbed to about $55,000. (Quisic's donation is valued at $5,000 per user; however, the company is not tracking usage.) "It was clear people were suiting up for the skills they would need to move into white-collar jobs," says Daniel Neal, president and CEO of VCampus.

Quisic also offered free Web-based courses on e-business, leadership and management communications to another one of its clients, Rockwell Collins in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The manufacturer of airplane cockpit instrumentation systems announced plans in November to reduce its staff of 17,500 by more than 2,600. "It was our desire to do something helpful for the company," says George Weathersby, president and CEO of Quisic. He adds that Quisic extended the offer to any of its clients going through downsizing.

Cliff Purington, director of learning

and development for Rockwell Collins, liked the idea of making e-learning available to laid-off workers so much that he added some 50 courses covering time management, communication skills, interviewing skills and end-user applications such as Microsoft Office. "My thought was that these are folks I've already bought [course] licenses for," he says. Rather than let the licenses go unused, Purington offered them to employees who were losing their jobs. Rockwell Collins also brought computers — and, in one case, a T1 line — into outplacement centers so former employees who didn't have Internet access at home would be able to take advantage of the online courses.

Purington isn't tracking enrollment data, but he has heard favorable comments from workers at the outplacement centers. When asked why Rockwell went through the effort, Purington gives much the same explanation as Cisco's Grace, Capella's Bassett and VCampus's Neal. "It was the right thing to do," he says.

Philanthropic business

Sure, positive PR is one reason to make e-learning available to the jobless, but for some companies, the motive goes deeper. "This is an opportunity to begin to educate more people about what online learning can achieve in terms of solving business problems," says VCampus's Neal.

For companies like United Airlines, the online courses provided a way for workers to improve their skills during downtime. "This isn't like technology replacement where jobs are being lost [permanently]," Quisic's Weathersby says of the airline's reason for downsizing. As travelers get back on planes and flight schedules return to normal, he expects many of those workers will be recalled to their old jobs — or have the opportunity to apply for new ones.

"United made a huge investment in those people in terms of their training over the years. Those workers have developed a knowledge of how the company works, so it's to the advantage of the company to maintain and nurture those relationships and help them return successfully," he says.

In addition, online education can help build a computer-literate workforce in areas where skilled workers — and access to colleges and universities — are hard to find. On Minnesota's Iron Range, where taconite mining had long been the backbone of the local economy, most of the laid-off mine workers had no education beyond high school. Those who wanted to pursue a bachelor's degree had to travel several hours to reach the nearest four-year college.

Capella's Bassett says the school offered the tuition grants after Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone challenged private industry to create jobs in the economically troubled area. "We knew that if they were going to create jobs, they'd need an educated workforce to fill them," says Bassett.

Urban areas are also struggling with a changing economy — especially after the events of Sept. 11 permanently eliminated some jobs. "Six thousand people lost their jobs just at LAX," says Donald Emery, executive director of the SmartForce E-Learning Foundation. The foundation recently signed a letter of intent to provide free online courses to the HOPE Coalition, a citywide initiative to help workers who were laid off as a result of the attacks.

"A baggage handler may not have the skills needed to use a computer or get into Web design or other areas considered to be knowledge work," Emery says. But the definition of knowledge work has changed, making computer skills essential for doing jobs that were once considered hands-on.

For example, mechanics who repair Los Angeles' new buses, which are powered by compressed natural gas, need to know how to use computerized diagnostic tools. Last year, Emery says, the city lost $67 million because mechanics didn't know how to use the computerized tools and mistakenly replaced parts that weren't broken. "The government is saying we need to clean up the air and get the old diesel buses off the road. But you need a skilled workforce to repair the new buses," he says.

Spreading the word

Vendors that are offering free online courses are hoping to reap the benefits of their generosity in another way: by showing laid-off workers how effective e-learning can be. "The whole world of online learning today is still very much in its proof period," says VCampus's Neal. "Many things have been tried; many things have worked; some things have failed. A lot of learning is going on, but the plain fact is that online education and training is still not that well understood in corporate America."

Neal and Quisic's Weathersby hope that learners who get a taste of what online learning can deliver will share their enthusiasm with the organizations that hire them.

One new believer is Tong Zhou. Initially skeptical of learning in any setting other than a classroom, she enrolled in an online Oracle database administrator certification program from San Jose e-learning provider eWebUniversity after learning that her husband was being transferred to Los Angeles.

Today, she works through lessons online and on CD-ROM. And every Thursday evening, she gathers in a virtual classroom with fellow learners and an instructor to view demonstrations, practice new skills and ask questions by email and telephone. "Right now, what I could learn on site, I can learn online," Zhou says. "I don't see any difference."

Kim Kiser (kkiser@onlinelearningmag.com) is managing editor of Online Learning Magazine.

No more yawns

The majority of self-paced learning may be boring, but there's a lot to be learned from the exceptions.

By Patti Shank

If you read my column each month, you know that I have a tiny bit of an attitude about self-paced e-learning. "Yawnfest" describes most of it. That's partly because the level of interaction is just too darn low: Many self-paced online courses are nothing more than pages of text dumped on the Web.

Rod Sims, associate professor of instructional technology at Deakin University in Australia, places self-paced e-learning on a continuum of interaction (*www.gsu.edu/~wwwitr/docs/interact/*). At the lowest end is what he calls object interactivity: someone clicking on an object (say, a button) and receiving a response such as a thank-you screen. Slightly higher on Sims' scale is linear interactivity, which means users can move back and forth through content in a linear sequence. At the higher end of the continuum is something Sims calls contextual interactivity, which means the content mirrors the learner's work environment. Simulations fall into this category.

Why do most online courses rank so low on Sims' continuum? One reason is a lack of insight by designers and developers. It's hard to come up with creative ways to build interaction into a course when you don't have high-quality models. That's not to say designing engaging interaction is impossible. In fact, I've run across several good examples of it in self-paced online courses.

Statistically speaking

When I talk to friends about courses they hated in college, statistics and economics seem to be at the top of the list. Why? I think it's because both disciplines require students to visualize how various factors cause mathematical changes over time — no easy task.

I just finished an intermediate stats class as part of my doctoral work, and I won't lie: It was quite a challenge. The textbook appeared to be written in medieval Latin. Most of the students gave up on it within the first few weeks. As a good self-directed learner, I searched for better tools.

Enter *Seeing Statistics* (*www.seeingstatistics.com*), a "webbook" that allows the learner to actually experience statistical concepts. For instance, the concept of "squared error" is not intuitive, but it's important. If you don't understand it, intermediate- and high-

level statistics will be nearly impossible to grasp. Although squared error is hard to explain using static text and graphs, a dynamic graph allows the learner to try things and see what happens as a result.

The ability to manipulate graphs, along with my instructor's perseverance and good teaching, helped me ace statistics, despite the textbook. I feel confident about the upcoming advanced course because I understand the underlying concepts. And that's the way learning is supposed to work.

You can learn a lot about good self-paced learning from *Seeing Statistics*. The navigational elements are simple and clear, and the introduction does a great job helping learners understand how to use the program. Since the dynamic graphs and charts are Java-based, the program checks to see if your browser is compatible. Helping the learner become comfortable with the technology is part of the developer's job, and this webbook does it well.

Soft-skills online?

I hear trainers say it's impossible to conduct good soft-skills training online. It's not, given a little creativity and smart use of the available media.

Stephen Anderson, president of Anderson-Davis (*www.anderson-davis.com*), has designed and delivered in-person courses on topics such as diversity, management and sexual harassment for 29 years. He also wrote one of the most widely used sexual harassment video training programs, "Intent vs. Impact," and is now developing online courses on the same topics. (In the interest of disclosure, I was involved in the initial conceptualization and design of these courses.)

What makes Anderson's online courses compelling is the opportunity for learners to delve into realistic and compelling workplace situations. The short videos, coupled with what-do-you-think exercises, force learners to evaluate each scenario and determine an appropriate course of action.

I like the videos' simplicity and practicality. The scenarios effectively illustrate the subtle (and not-so-subtle) complexities of human behavior and provide practical ways to prevent and respond to offensive behavior.

Why do this type of training online? Aside from being able to reach a large number of geographically dispersed employees, the anonymity of the online environment works particularly well for such a sensitive subject. Also, people can view the scenarios as many times as they need, or they can use segments of the courses as performance support tools. (The courses are available in streaming video and Flash so they can be used by a wide audience.)

Even if you don't have a need for soft-skills training or statistics classes, check out these examples of good self-paced learning — you'll no doubt come away with some ideas for your own courses.

Patti Shank is an instructional technology consultant and faculty member at the University of Colorado in Denver. She can be reached through her Web site at www.learningpeaks.com

face-to-face to online
the best of online learning 2001 is now online
visit vnulearning.com for these conference highlights and more:
Free Webcast of former President Clinton's keynote address
Free Webcast of State of the Industry keynote address
Free Webcasts of Beginner Track sessions
State of the Industry report from Online Learning Magazine/IDC
Results of Software Simulation Shootouts and Excellence in E-Learning Awards from Online Learning Magazine and brandon-hall.com
Free white papers on online learning, knowledge management & more
Session handouts from Online Learning 2001
Conference Chair Gloria Gery's show wrap-up
Free online learning courses
Connect online today to the e-learning industry's leading face-to-face event!!
online learning 2002
vnulearning.com
vnu business media
YAHOO! Broadcast Services
Web cast sponsor
online learning
Plus, Don't Miss... online learning 2002 europe
March 5-6, 2002 London, UK
Visit www.vnulearning.com for details.

Get the strategies you need to put e-learning to work for you...FREE!

If you're not subscribing to *Online Learning Magazine*, you're probably missing out on the latest e-learning strategies. Spending too much time figuring out which vendors do what. Struggling with how to motivate online learners.

Online Learning Magazine can help you make sense out of all the confusing e-learning information out there. Cut through the clutter. Simplify your job. And, stay ahead of the curve.

Best of all, ours is the only magazine that exclusively reports on e-learning from an objective point of view. It brings you concise, accessible and easy-to-understand information you can use.

A FREE subscription includes the Excellence in E-Learning awards, the E-Learning Buyer's Guide, and Industry Watch.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

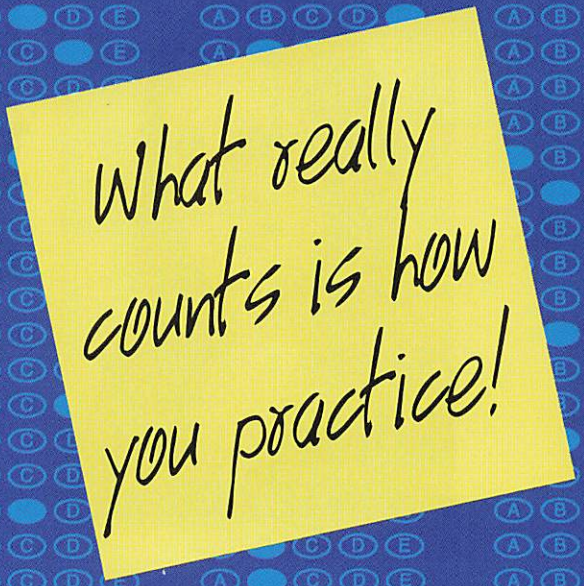
Call 612-333-0471

Fax to 612-340-4819

or subscribe online at www.OnlineLearningMag.com

V0100

You know what practice makes...



MeasureUp's Certification Preparation products will help you pass!

MEASUREUP™
Know what you know™

MEASUREUP PROVIDES THE TOOLS YOU NEED:

- **Simulation Question Types** – Simulate the real exam experience including: create a tree, select and place, drop and connect, build list, reorder list, build and reorder list hot spot, and fill in the blank.
- **Multiple Modes of Study** – Study, certification, custom and adaptive modes allow individuals to maximize study and learning.
- **Discussion Boards and Hosted Forums** – Thousands of I.T. professionals interact regarding certification, exam questions, and solutions to technical problems.
- **Reference to the Miscrosoft Official Curriculum plus other resources** – Read and study further information about difficult topics found in a test question.
- **Multiple Modes of Deployment** – Online (instant reporting, scoring and product upgrades), Download, and CD-ROM formats allow individuals to use the most efficient means for their individual study methods.

Microsoft Certified Professional
Practice Test Provider

Cisco
CompTIA
CIW
Microsoft
Novell
Oracle

Perfect Preparation:
WWW.MEASUREUP.COM
Log on or call us at 678.356.5000

©2001 Measure Up, Inc. All rights reserved. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners and are used for informational purposes only.

Not-so-scary movies

Streaming video server technology isn't as intimidating as it sounds.

By Wendy Webb

Adding simple movies to your online tutorials doesn't sound too hard, does it? But when you consider it takes streaming video server technology to do it, you might run screaming for the door, especially if you're a non-geek like me.

Despite the numbingly technical name, streaming video servers are simple to use. "The process for creating content is very straightforward and can be learned in less than half an hour," says Damian Tarnawsky, CEO of Australia-based Nexus Concepts, which sells a product called Flash Cam.

Say you want to make a tutorial on how to use new software. You record demonstrations or "movies" using screen captures, delete unnecessary frames, add boxes of text and record voice-overs straight onto your hard drive. Then preview the movie, export it and upload it to your Web server.

You may not end up with "Lord of the Rings"–quality animation, but you can create a sort of souped-up PowerPoint presentation. "You can create a simple, linear experience, but there's a lot more to it than that," says Rhonda Stratton, senior product line manager for Apple Computer, which makes the QuickTime streaming video server. For example, you can take several panoramic photos and build a virtual reality scene in which learners can check out what's behind doors in a hallway. Stratton says another way you can use this technology is to add click-sensitive reference points within a tutorial. Learners click on whatever they would like more information about and a reference box or Web link pops up.

In addition to Flash Cam and QuickTime, you'll find a number of streaming video server packages on the market (see chart). SageCam from SageWorks, Windows Media Encoder from Microsoft and Viewlet Builder from Qarbon are a few of the more popular ones, many of which sell for $100 or less.

Where Flash Cam produces simple animations, Windows Media Encoder and Apple's QuickTime lend themselves to richer uses. Windows Media Encoder allows users to con-

Streaming video servers

Company	Product	Features	Minimum requirements	Price at press time
Apple Computer www.apple.com 800-692-7753	QuickTime Pro	Creates slide shows from digital images; imports and exports video, audio and images from more than a dozen file formats; prepares and compresses streaming audio and video	Mac: Power PC, Mac OS 7.5, 32MB RAM; PC: Pentium processor, Windows 95, 32MB RAM	$29.99
Microsoft www.microsoft.com 425-882-8080	Windows Media Encoder	Converts both live and prerecorded audio and video to Windows Media format; multiple source support; works with Pocket PC	200MHz processor; Windows 98; 32MB RAM	Free
Nexus Concepts www.nexusconcepts.com	Flash Cam Personal	One-click screen capture; MP3 streaming audio; customizable images; simple movie file export; streaming or CD-ready; works with Pocket PC	200MHz processor; Windows 95; 32MB RAM; 10MB hard drive space; Flash-enabled browser for movie playback	$79
	Flash Cam Professional	Includes all features in personal version, plus export to EXE files; emailable movies	Same as Flash Cam Personal	$149; $699 corporate version (five users)
Qarbon www.qarbon.com 408-792-3800	Viewlet Builder Freeware Edition	Immediate viewing of films through a 5K dial-up line; no plug-ins required; Viewlets can be uploaded for free to Qarbon's dedicated servers	Pentium II 350 MHz processor, Windows 95, 64MB RAM	Free
	Viewlet Builder Professional Edition	All features included in Freeware Edition, plus greater customization options	Same as Freeware Edition	Single license, $899; volume discounts
SageWorks www.sagecam.com 303-660-5227	SageCam	Creates audio recordings and videos of any display activity including presentations, Web sites and software demonstrations; whiteboard and highlighting capabilities; emailable videos	Windows 32 bit OS	$79.95

vert both live and prerecorded audio, video and computerized images to Windows Media-based content for live and on-demand delivery. Similarly, QuickTime allows users to build all kinds of animation and interactivity into their productions.

Is buying easy, too?

While this software may be inexpensive and simple to use, consider the following before deciding which one is right for you:

Support. Lurk around the message boards on the vendors' Web sites. What are users saying? What problems are they having? How long does it take for the company to respond to questions? Some vendors offer free support by email and on message boards. Others add new features to their products every few weeks in response to users' demands.

Streaming. Most vendors' Web sites feature examples of tutorials created with their products. Test-drive them. Figure out how long you have to wait for the video to launch and whether the launch time would be acceptable to users. Flash Cam, SageCam and Viewlet Builder all begin playback in less than 10 seconds, even on slow Internet connections.

File output. The smaller the file, the better it will play at low bandwidths. Look for products that use "delta frame compression," which produces very small files. A four-minute movie with voiceovers that takes up 520K of compressed space and streams at 2.3K per second will play well, even on a 33.6K modem connection. "As a side benefit to having better streaming, you can also accommodate more users viewing at the same time," Tarnawsky says.

Platform independence. Will users be able to view your movies on a Mac or Unix system? Products such as SageCam and Flash Cam work on any platform, while others are designed to work on certain operating systems. If your users are Mac people, for example, QuickTime is your best option.

Audio. If audio is vital to your training, consider those products that offer MP3 options for the best sound quality.

Interactivity and flexibility. Do you want to stretch your creative wings or are you happy to work within a template? Most streaming video products come with a standard set of captions, highlight boxes, click boxes and images. If you're new at this, you probably want to look for a product that comes with templates.

Examples and downloads. Most streaming video server vendors offer demos and tutorials explaining how to use their systems before buying. You might even find examples of how other companies have used their software to create Web-based training. In addition, most vendors offer free downloads from their Web sites. Try them for 30 days. That's the best way to know whether they will meet your needs.

Wendy Webb (wkwebb@chartermi.net) is a freelance technology writer in Duluth, Minn.

Transform Learning In Your Organization

Walden's Online Instructor Certification Series equips you with the tools you need to design, develop and facilitate dynamic online programs, including *LIVE* online instruction.

Certified Online Instructor
Focus on Asynchronous Instruction

Certified Synchronous Instructor
Focus on Live Online Instruction

Certified Online Instructional Developer
Focus on Design and Development of Online Courses

Walden also offers certificate programs in: Information Technology, Webmaster and Business Training workshops.

For more information on our programs, phone **1-800-237-6434, ext. 5145** or **941-949-5145** outside the United States. Visit **www.WaldenInstitute.com/ol**

Visit us at ASTD 2002 in booth #612/614!

Walden Institute is an affiliate of Walden University. Walden University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

WALDEN INSTITUTE
www.WaldenInstitute.com/ol

elementk

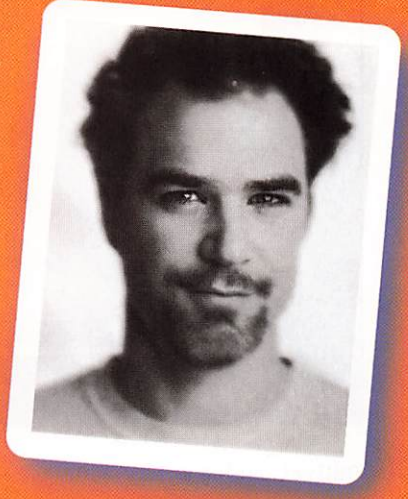
e-learning with a human touch

STUDIES SHOW
HUMAN INTERACTION HELPS
CHILDREN STAY ENGAGED.

Surprise, surprise,
it helps e-Learners, too.

In a classroom or at a computer, it's still the same story: Engaged learners learn more. So at Element K, we don't just create e-courseware with best-in-class content. We create entire e-worlds where learners and training professionals have online access to Books 24x7 reference tools, vLab® Technology, instructors, students, ideas, and anything else they need to stay tuned in and turned on, every step of the way.

After all, with 20 years' experience in adult professional education, we're not just a technology company venturing into e-Learning. We're training experts who use e-Learning to unleash the potential in your employees as individuals. And in your organization as a whole. Experience the difference a human touch can make. Call 1.800.434.3466 or visit www.elementk.com.



©2002 Element K LLC. All rights reserved.

Market Place

FOR AD RATES AND INFORMATION
CALL TODD SANFORD AT (800) 707-7796
FAX: (612) 340-4709
E-MAIL: TSANFORD@VNUBUSPUBS.COM

Invest in Your Employees

iStudySmart

For 16 years we've helped people complete their college degrees via distance learning. Now we provide great programs for companies offering educational benefits to valued employees.

iStudySmart.com

888-290-8605

Human Capital Management Solutions

888.249.4898
www.avondalesearch.com

LEARNING.NET

LEARNING.NET offers a full suite of products and services that provide cost effective e-learning for large and small organizations.

- A convenient administrative package, an LCMS with RLOs and a Web based authoring tool. Easy interfaces to other systems.
- Contact us at info@learning.net or call 1-949-497-1318 ext. 15

www.learning.net

Market Place

America's largest companies have hired us for:

- eLearning Consulting
- Systems Integration
- LMS Selection Service
- Custom C/WBT Development
- Failed eLearning Recovery Strategies
- On-line Testing/ Assessment Solutions
- Custom LMS Development
- Standards Compliance Technology Assessment

Contact us to find out what we can do for you!

Visit us at www.testingsolutions.com or e-mail sales@testingsolutions.com. for your free "Guidelines for Selecting a Learning Management System You Can Live With" document.

testing solutions .com

The eLearning Authority

Or call 757-208-6600

MindRise.com™

enlightened online learning™

The fastest, easiest, most economical way to deploy a superlative online learning experience!

We are a seasoned team of educational professionals with years of online experience and industry accolades. Outsource your online learning projects to MindRise today. **You'll be in e-business in weeks.**

Contact: Godfrey Parkin
+1-703-250-5078
gparkin@mindrise.com
www.mindrise.com

YOUR AD HERE!

Call Todd Sanford @
(800) 707-7796

Advertiser Index

Centra Software
www.centra.com ..... Cover 2-1

DKSystems
www.dksystems.com 17

E-Com
www.theorix.com 10

Element K
www.elementk.com 29

GeoMetrix
www.trainingpartner2000.com .. Cover 3

LearnKey
www.learnkey.com 3

MeasureUp
www.measureup.com 9

MindLeaders
www.mindleaders.com 15

Online Learning Conference
www.vnulearning.com 25

Pathlore
www.pathlore.com 7

Smart Technologies
www.smarttech.com 5

SmartForce
www.smartforce.com 11

Sun Microsystems
www.sun.com/service ..... Cover 4

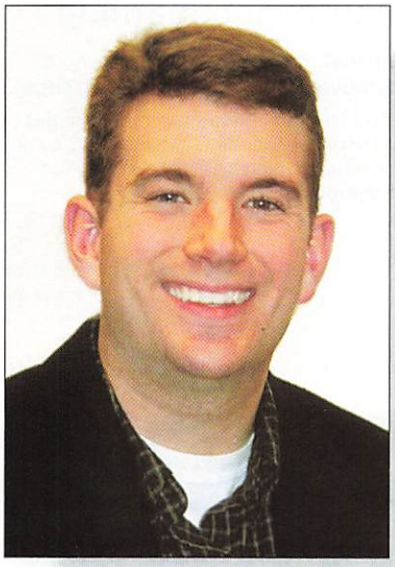
Walden University
www.esuccessbuilders.com 28

Xstream Software
www.xstream.com 16

Yahoo.com
www.yahoo.com 23

Reality Check

Web-Based Training: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly



Good science

www.geneed.com

By Mike Flanagan

In previous columns, I've discussed how Flash can be used to illustrate complex concepts, but Macromedia's popular tool can do more than just create pretty pictures. One company that makes particularly elegant use of Flash is GeneEd, a life-science e-learning company that creates courses for biopharmaceutical training.

GeneEd's courses do have great illustrations — their visual explanations of how HIV attacks the immune system or how anti-HIV drugs work to combat the virus' spread are a quantum leap from the undergraduate science textbooks I remember — but what really drew my attention was the way GeneEd uses Flash to solve other instructional challenges.

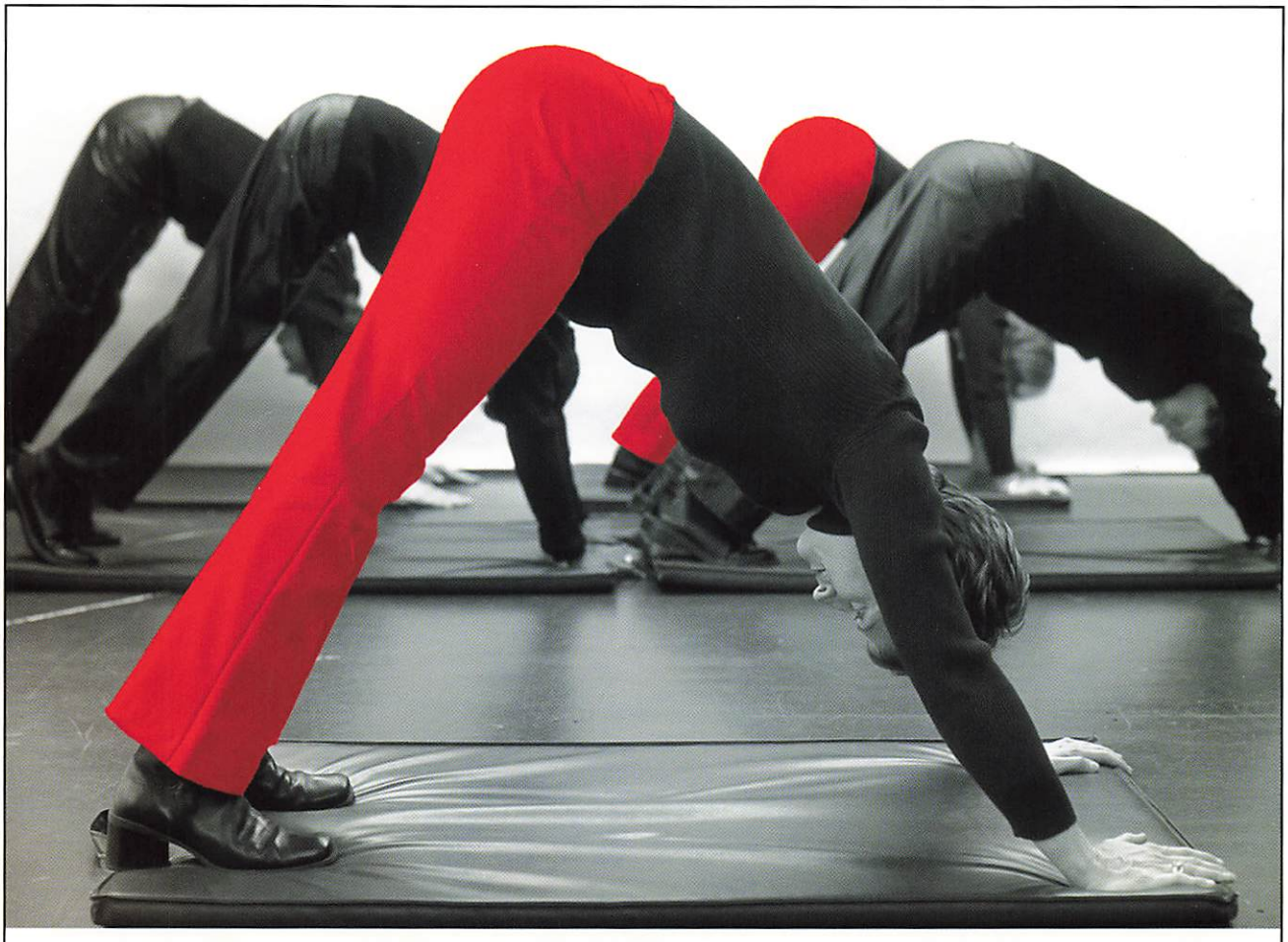
Go to *www.geneed.com*, click on the "HIV Therapy" demo course, and you can see what caught my eye:

Learners set the pace. Too often, we sacrifice user control for rich, multimedia instruction. Once learners hit the play button, they can't easily scan an audio or video clip for relevant information. GeneEd's Flash interface offers a nifty solution — a "slider bar" that allows users to click and drag back and forth through the animation. Learners can fast-forward to the right place without missing any screens.

Multitasking encouraged. GeneEd combines the best of two frequently used course features: animated "show me" descriptions and "click to learn more" explanations. In the "show me" sections, the narrator describes the components of a particularly complex diagnostic matrix, explaining rows and columns that the course highlights in sequence. As the narrator speaks, learners can explore the diagram, mousing over various cells to get additional information.

Help when it's needed. Most online courses have help sections that explain key features or tools, but most of these tend to be virtual alcoves. Learners must leave the course to enter these side rooms. GeneEd's approach is less disruptive and more effective — its help button triggers a subtle fade-in of labels and pointers that identify features and functions. Learners don't have to leave the course to get assistance.

Mike Flanagan (mike@lguide.com) is vice president of research and consulting at Lguide.com, an e-learning research and consulting firm in Tacoma, Wash.



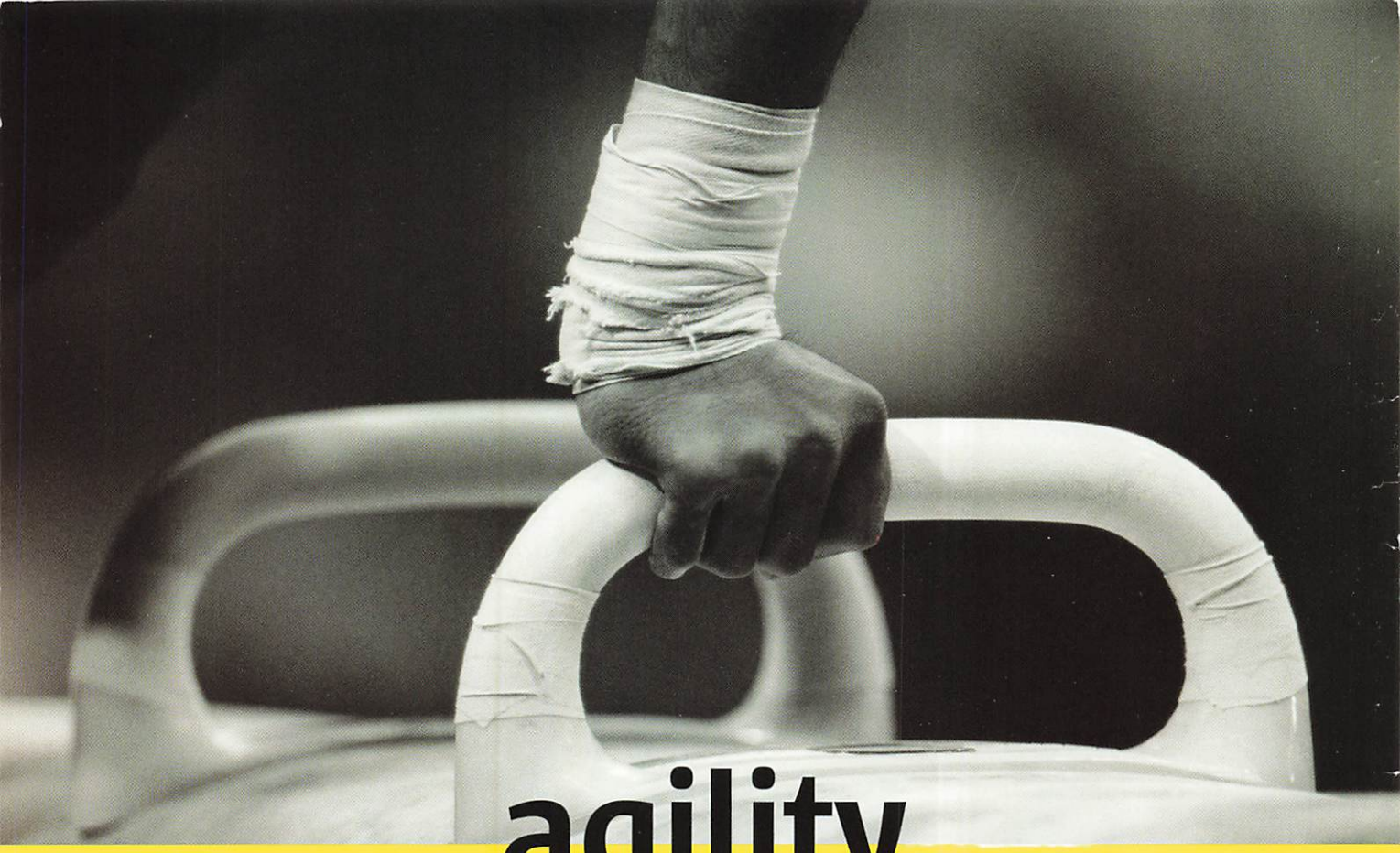
Our Team in Training

Committed to being as flexible as our software

Training Partner *2000* is specifically designed to work the way your organization does — featuring drag-and-drop simplicity, a customizable set of features and a very reasonable price* — no other LMS lets you get more done in less time. Multi-language Web access and portal capability ensure that **Training Partner** *2000* **ONLINE** is truly in a class of its own. With over 10 years experience, GeoMetrix Data Systems has created the most flexible solution for the administration of blended learning. *Check it out!*

For more information call 1-800-616-5409,
visit www.trainingpartner2000.com
or drop by Booth #1515 at
ASTD 2002 in New Orleans

**funky pants not included*



agility

Sun Educational Services is a leader in enterprise learning, offering blended learning solutions encompassing consulting, instructor-led training, eLearning, certification, and learning management. Sun can provide the end-to-end tools and services you need to effectively manage your intellectual capital. Building on a solid foundation of services, content and architecture, Sun provides a total learning solution that addresses the unique needs and challenges of today's learning environment. And then we can help you align your people, resources, and processes to make the most of your organization's productivity and potential.

For more information on total training solutions from Sun Educational Services, visit us at

ASTD 2002, June 3–5

in New Orleans, at **booth #2000.**

Or go to **sun.com/learning/us/enterprise** or call **800.422.8020.**

Sun microsystems

©2002 Sun Microsystems, Inc. All rights reserved. Sun, Sun Microsystems, and the Sun logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sun Microsystems, Inc. in the United States and other countries.